This has been done taking into account prevailing interest rates in the entire financial systems and interest rates payable on deposits by NBFCs.

'Escort Service' for Common Man Visiting DDA

*494. SHRIMATI VANGA CEETHA : Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to set up an 'Escort Service' to help common man visiting the office of Delhi Development Authority in Vikas Sadan-

(b) if so, the nature of service to be provided by Escort Service; and

(c) by when diis service is likely to become functional ?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION (SHRIJAGMOHAN): (a) DDA offices are open to the public every Monday and Thursday afternoon when they can meet senior officers without fixing prior appointment. On other days, they may meet senior officers by appointment. For on the spot guidance, DDA has provided services of a number of Counsellors and Facilitators at its reception desk to help the common people.

(b) DDA has recently decided to upgrade these services and increase the number of Counsellors for better personal guidance and service to the public visiting Vikas Sadan. The Counsellors will help in preparation of the documents, guide them about the procedures and provide ready information on various subjects/policies.

(c) The service is already being provided. DDA has only decided to increase the number of counsellors/facilitators gradually after due training.

Social Evil of Scavenging

*495. SHRI R.N. ARYA : Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning to tackle the social evil of scavenging;

(b) if so, the number of scavengers in the country;

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*Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) the details of provisions of Government schemes and financial assistance if any, for uplift of such people;

(d) whether any proposal has been considered for their employment; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e) As per reports received from State Governments and UT Adminis-trations, there are about 6.5 lakh scavengers and their dependents in the country.

The Ministry is operating the National Scheme of Liberation and Rehabilitation of the Scavengers and their dependents (NSLRS). Under the scheme, 100% assistance is provided by the Central Government to Scheduled Castes Development Corporations (SCDCs)/State Governments for training, and upto Rs. 10,000/- as subsidy for starting economically viable units by the scavengers and their dependents. The Ministry has also suggested the adoption of the concept of sanitary marts which envisages bringing together of scavengers into groups to undertake economically viable projects and development of entrepreneurial skills and to pool their resources to empower scavengers to be productively engaged in economically beneficial activities. National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC) also extends concessional finance to Safai Karamcharis including scavengers, for establishing income generating and viable projects. The scavengers are considered for employment under Government as per existing policy which provides for reservation for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes.

The Statement containing the details of the provisions under the scheme and the amounts released in the last two years under NSLRS and by NSKFDC is annexed. *(See* below) Under the scheme various steps are taken to develop skills in scavengers for their employment in alternate and dignified occupations.

The Ministry of Urban Development and Poverty Alleviation also implements the Low Cost Sanitation Scheme which aims at conversion of dry latrines into wet latrines and construction of water borne flush latrines.

Statement

Provisions Relating to Assistance under the National Scheme of Liberation and Rehabilitation of Scavengers and their Dependents

OBJECTIVES

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has been operating the National Scheme of Liberation and Rehabilitation of Scavengers and their dependents (NSLRS). The objective of the scheme is to liberate scavengers from the hereditary and inhuman occupation of manually removing night soil and filth and to provide for and engage them in alternative and dignified occupations. With this objective in view, the Government of India launched the Scheme in March, 1992, after splitting the erstwhile scheme of conversion of dry latrines and rehabilitation of liberated scavengers that was started in 1981-82.

The main components of the scheme are :—

(i) *Survey*—Time bound programme for identification of scavengers and their dependents and their aptitude for alternative trade through a survey.

(ii) *Training*—The Scheme provides for training of scavengers in the age group of 15-50 years in the training institutes of Central Government, State Governments, Local Bodies and Non-Governmental Organisations on TRYSEM norms. The training period should be for a maximum duration of 6 months. The stipend provided to a scavenger for training is upto Rs. 500/- per month. Besides this, the training fees per scavenger is upto Rs. 300/- per month, honorarium to craftsman upto Rs. 100 per month and toolkit allowance upto Rs. 2000/- per scavenger, is also permissible. The full cost of training is borne by Government of India.

(iii) *Rehabilitation*—Towards rehabilitation of scavengers, projects costing upto Rs. 50,000/- for each beneficiary are financed by way of a prescribed financial package comprising of 50% subsidy subject to a ceiling of Rs. 10,000/- per project, 15% of project cost as Margin Money Loan (MML) which is shared between the Central Government and State Governments in the ratio 49 : 51 and the rest through bank loan.

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Funds released under National Scheme of Liberation and Rehabilitation of Scavengers and their dependents during 1999-2000 and 2000-2001

(Rs. in crores)

Year	Central Assistance Released
1999-2000	70.00
2000-2001	60.92
TOTAL :	130.92

Funds disbursed by National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC)

(Rs. in lakhs)

Scheme	1999-2000	2000-2001
Regular Scheme	2015.77	2911.46
Micro-Credit Scheme		1249.53
TOTAL :	2015.77	4160.99

Ideal Hospitals

*496. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many State Governments have approached the Government for establishing ideal hospitals in their States;

(b) if so, the details thereof and whether an ideal hospital is proposed to be established in Uttar Pradesh during the current year; and

(c) the criteria of approving an ideal hospital and meeting the financial liabilities thereof?